

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 02807

NASA FOR TERRELL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSPA, UR, US

SUBJECT: US-USSR SPACE COOPERATION: SHUTTLE-SALYUT AND
INTERPLANETARY

REF: (A) MOSCOW 2737, (B) STATE 34337, (C) MOSCOW 2726

1. WE BELIEVE IT IS TIME FOR THE U.S. TO CONSIDER OUR
NEXT STEP IN STRATEGY OF ATTEMPTING TO MOVE THE SOVIETS
TOWARD A MORE EFFECTIVE COOPERATION IN EXCHANGE OF
INTERPLANETARY INFORMATION. PETROV-LOVELACE LETTER ON
RENEWAL OF NASA-ACADEMY AGREEMENT (REF A) DOES NOT OFFER
MUCH HOPE THAT SOVIETS PLAN TO COOPERATE IN AN EXCHANGE
OF INTERPLANETARY INFORMATION IN A SIGNIFICANTLY MORE
MEANINGFUL WAY THAN THEY HAVE IN THE PAST. ALTHOUGH
DEFINITE EVALUATION OF SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THIS REGARD
WILL HAVE TO AWAIT PROMISED SOVIET RESPONSE TO
HINNERS LETTER (REF B), THE TENOR OF VERESHCHETIN'S
REMARKS IN RECENT WEEKS AS WELL AS CONTENT OF PETROV-
LOVELACE LETTER DOES NOT BODE WELL FOR OUR HOPES IN THIS
AREA. IN PARTICULAR, INTERKOSMOS SHOWS LITTLE SIGN OF
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HAVING ACCEPTED AGREEMENT WHICH WE THOUGHT HAD BEEN
REACHED DURING HINNERS-KIRILLING MEETING.

2. IN SPITE OF VERESHCHETIN'S REPEATED WARNINGS NOT TO
ASSUME THAT THE SOVIETS WANT SHUTTLE-SALYUT MORE THAN US
DOES, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT LINKAGE OF THE TWO
TOPICS OFFERS THE U.S. SOME LEVERAGE TO MOVE THE SOVIETS

TOWARD A MORE COOPERATIVE STANCE. DURING THE SHUTTLE-SALYUT TALKS IN MOSCOW LAST NOVEMBER SOVIETS APPEARED EAGER TO GAIN ACCESS TO SHUTTLE SYSTEM. IN THE SHUTTLE VS. SALYUT CAPABILITIES COMPARISON A JOINT PROJECT WOULD APPEAR TO BE ATTRACTIVE TO THE SOVIETS. THEY HAVE NOTHING COMPARABLE TO THE HEAVY PAYLOAD CAPACITY AND REPEATED ORBITAL FLIGHT CAPABILITY OF THE SHUTTLE, WHILE SKYLAB (IF IT SURVIVES) AND SPACELAB WILL OFFER THE US LONG ORBITAL STAY TIME SIMILAR TO THAT OF SALYUT. THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF SHUTTLE-SALYUT PROBABLY ALSO APPEAR ATTRACTIVE TO THE SOVIETS. CONTINUING NEGOTIATIONS ON A POSSIBLE SHUTTLE-SALYUT FLIGHT CAN BE TAKEN AS A SIGN THAT DETENTE IS STILL ALIVE, WHILE A SUCCESSFUL SHUTTLE-SALYUT MISSION COULD BE SEEN AS A REAFFIRMATION OF APPARENT EQUALITY IN SPACE, AS WELL AS BEING OF INTEREST TO THE SOVIETS TECHNICALLY.

3. VERESHCHETIN'S REMARKS ON THE LACK OF CONNECTION BETWEEN SHUTTLE-SALYUT AND INTERPLANETARY COOPERATION, AS WELL AS THE PLANNED DISTINCT COMPOSITION OF THE SOVIET DELEGATIONS IN THESE AREAS, PROBABLY SHOWS THAT THE SOVIETS WILL ATTEMPT TO KEEP THE TWO TOPICS SEPARATED. IN PARTICULAR, SOVIETS APPARENTLY SEE LITTLE REASON TO HOLD THE SHUTTLE-SALYUT AND INTERPLANETARY MEETINGS CONCURRENTLY. IF WE WISH TO ESTABLISH LINKAGE BETWEEN SHUTTLE-SALYUT AND INTERPLANETARY COOPERATION, CONFIDENTIAL

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WE BELIEVE THAT THE POINT MUST NOW BE MADE IN A MORE EXPLICIT FASHION. THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND THAT NASA SEND AN INTERIM REPLY TO VERESHCHETIN LETTER ON SHUTTLE-SALYUT (REF C), ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF VERESHCHETIN'S LETTER AND STATING THAT A DEFINITE REPLY WILL AWAIT SOVIET RESPONSE ON POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING SHUTTLE-SALYUT TALKS AT SAME TIME AS THE INTERPLANETARY MEETING. HOWEVER, IF THIS APPROACH IS ADOPTED, WE MUST MOVE QUICKLY TO GET OUR LETTER TO THE SOVIETS BEFORE THEY HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO REPLY TO HINNERS LETTER. MATLOCK

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